

IS THERE A SUBSTITUTE FOR VICTORY? ACCEPTANCE OF DEFEAT IN WAR

BY

COLONEL STEVEN E. LANDIS
United States Army

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U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA 17013-5050

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IS THERE A SUBSTITUTE FOR VICTORY? ACCEPTANCE OF DEFEAT IN WAR

by

Colonel Steven E. Landis
United States Army

Dr. Mark Grimsley
Project Adviser

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U.S. Army War College
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013

ABSTRACT

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The United States has generally succeeded in achieving military victory over its enemies but, in recent decades, has had less success in the completion and consolidation of victory in order to realize long term post-conflict objectives. An influential school of thought argues that it is essential for our military adversaries to understand and accept that they have been defeated in battle in order for the United States to achieve its long term objectives. This paper addresses the question of whether or not the acceptance of defeat by an enemy is, in fact, a significant contributor to post-conflict success. The research indicates that the acceptance of defeat may contribute to post-conflict success, but other factors are of equal or greater importance, including clearly defined post-conflict objectives, the effectiveness of military occupation, and the perception by both the occupier and the occupied of a common internal or external security threat. Post-conflict success requires an effective combination of the preceding factors, beginning with clear strategic objectives, but no single factor constitutes a prerequisite for or a guarantor of post-conflict success.

IS THERE A SUBSTITUTE FOR VICTORY? ACCEPTANCE OF DEFEAT IN WAR

But once war is forced upon us, there is no alternative than to apply every available means to bring it to a swift end. War's every object is victory, not prolonged indecision. In war, there is no substitute for victory.

—General Douglas MacArthur, 1951¹

The United States has generally succeeded in achieving military victory over its enemies but, in recent decades, had less success in the completion and consolidation of victory in order to realize long term post-conflict objectives. An influential school of thought argues that this has been the case because the enemy has not thoroughly understood itself to have been defeated. But is this view correct? The acceptance of defeat argument repeatedly points to a few case studies. The World War II defeat, occupation, and reconstruction of Germany and Japan are widely accepted as successful and viewed as a model cases. This has been the case especially in light of recent difficulties and setbacks in Iraq and Afghanistan. The World War I defeat of Germany and its aftermath, leading to the rise of Hitler and World War II, is widely held as a model of failure. The defeat of the Confederate States during the Civil War seems to contain elements of both success and failure. Because recent op-ed arguments about post-conflict success draw on these historical cases again and again, this paper will use them to examine the validity of the acceptance of defeat argument, and compare and contrast conclusions with the circumstances of the ongoing war in Iraq.

Key advocates of the idea that a successful post-conflict outcome hinges on our military adversaries understanding beyond any doubt that they have experienced defeat at the hands of the United States include Ralph Peters, Victor Davis Hanson, and Bing West. Peters, a retired officer and author, insists, "It is not enough to materially defeat

your enemy. You must convince your enemy that he has been defeated. You cannot do that by bombing empty buildings. You must be willing to kill in the short term to save lives and foster peace in the long term.”² In *The Soul of Battle*, classical historian and military commentator Victor Davis Hanson describes the expeditions mounted by Greek General Epaminondas, General William T. Sherman, and General George S. Patton as “marches to destroy the enemy’s spiritual and material resources rather than the annihilation of his armies in the field per se.”³ Hanson argues that these punitive marches into the enemy’s territory were crucial in bringing the war to the enemy populace, rendering them insecure, powerless, and demoralized—in short, acutely aware that they were defeated. In his assessment of the aftermath of Saddam Hussein’s fall and the seizure of Baghdad in modern day Iraq, retired officer and former Assistant Secretary of Defense Bing West writes:

The Sunni Triangle had not suffered the destruction of war. The swift invasion had not touched the Sunnis. Before a person can be rehabilitated, he must acknowledge his wrongdoing or the hopelessness of persisting with his past ways. The Sunnis did neither. They felt they were the aggrieved party. The American Army, while heavy handed at times, was by historical standards restrained, making mistakes that encouraged the rebels while not imposing the draconian tactics that had suppressed many prior insurgencies.⁴

The common theme of these and other writers and thinkers is that the enemy must be made to accept defeat, and that this acceptance is best achieved through attrition, occupation of territory, and coercive punishment of the enemy’s people and armed forces.

If one agrees with Clausewitz that war may be defined as “an act of force to compel the enemy to do our will,” then it follows that the defeat of an enemy occurs when he is compelled to do our will or is, at least, no longer attempting to compel us to

do his will.⁵ Refining that a bit further, we may identify degrees of defeat, ranging from total defeat, where the enemy is compelled to do our will in every particular, to minimal acquiescence, whereby the enemy is prevented from imposing his will upon us through a military stalemate. US Army War College faculty member and historian J. Boone Bartholomees writes about a theory of victory, which necessarily addresses the nature of defeat. “A conceptual scale of success runs from defeat through losing, not winning, tying, not losing, winning, and victory with shades and gradations between each point. Victory is completely fulfilling while defeat is catastrophic, but other possible results contain aspects of both winning and losing to some extent.”⁶ Furthermore, defeat is not permanent, especially if not total. Today’s defeat may come to be viewed very differently in the fullness of time, when it can be viewed in a broader context. This is an absolutely critical point. As Bartholomees notes, although World War I seemed like a decisive defeat of Germany and her allies in 1918, that verdict has been revised in light of subsequent events.⁷ Military defeat is seldom either absolute or permanent.

Clausewitz identifies two “inseparable factors” in overcoming an enemy’s resistance, the strength of will and the means of waging war.⁸ These two factors are helpful in identifying conditions for defeat. The first condition is the loss of the will to resist or fight on, within the context of scope and objectives of the war (moral exhaustion). As with defeat, the loss of will may be total or a matter of degree. For example, Saddam Hussein’s Iraq lost its will to continue the battle for Kuwait during the 1991 Persian Gulf War but would have almost certainly continued to resist a full scale allied invasion of Iraq. A second condition of defeat is the loss of the means to continue fighting (physical exhaustion). Germany, at the end of World War II, was physically

exhausted and without the means to continue fighting. These conditions may be present together or separately and to varying degrees, but the moral factor would appear to be the most important. History is replete with examples of very weak combatants who are able to continue resistance against a stronger power even with few physical means.

The outcomes of defeat may range from small changes to the status quo, to a fundamental reordering of society and culture, to national extinction.⁹ The peace terms following military defeat often include the loss of sovereign territory or colonies, demobilization or disarmament of the armed forces and society, financial reparations, and changes to the leadership and forms of government. Is the defeated combatant—people, armed forces, and government—willing to accept the result in total, in part, or not at all? Or are the people, armed forces, and government fractured, with the various parts accepting or rejecting separate outcomes and conditions? From the standpoint of the United States as military victor, the optimum outcome of war is for the people, the armed forces, and the government to understand the result, accept the conditions and outcomes of their defeat, and internalize those outcomes such that the result is unlikely to be revised or overturned. If one accepts that the United States generally desires long term peace, stability, the rule of law, and respect for human rights from a defeated enemy after a war, then the acceptance of defeat by all elements of the enemy's society would seem critical toward achieving those broad objectives.

The existing literature suggests no simple or consistent answer for translating battlefield victory into long term strategic success. British strategist and political scientist Colin Gray aligns most closely with those who believe in the importance of the

acceptance of defeat. "Given that most wars are not waged for unlimited goals, whether or not military victory proves politically decisive will be an issue for the (somewhat) defeated party to resolve."¹⁰ He argues that the defeated side must accept its defeat in order to allow for the achievement of political objectives, citing North Vietnam in 1968 and 1972 as an example of a nation defeated militarily that refused to accept defeat. Gray argues that the scale of military effort be sufficient to ensure that political objectives are met through coercion of the defeated side, sometimes requiring seemingly inordinate levels of military effort to achieve fairly limited political goals.¹¹

Political scientists Stephen L. Quackenbush and Jerome F. Venteicher argue that the political outcome of a conflict tends to be more important than the battlefield outcome in determining long term success.¹² They examine 2,973 militarized disputes between 1816 and 2001 and address the relationships between conflict outcomes, settlements, and conflict recurrence.¹³ Their findings indicate no direct relationship between the conflict outcome—decisive victory, compromise, or a stalemate—and post conflict stability. Decisive military outcomes of conflicts may be important only to the extent that they allow for effective settlements, whether negotiated or imposed by the victor.¹⁴

Strategic victory that follows a military victory is difficult to define and increasingly difficult to achieve, says political scientist Robert Mandel.¹⁵ Leaders and nations often modify their objectives during the course of a conflict, especially as their political and military fortunes change. As a consequence, the achievement of pre-conflict objectives, even in the aftermath of a decisive military victory, may not result in the achievement of strategic victory. Mandel cites the 1991 Persian Gulf War as an example of a situation

where the United States achieved both decisive military victory and its stated political objective, the expulsion of Iraqi military forces from Kuwait, but was ultimately dissatisfied with the strategic outcome that allowed Saddam Hussein to remain in power in Iraq. Mandel specifically addresses the notion that “the war is over and victory is at hand only when the loser decides to submit to the winner’s demands, thus recognizing and accepting military defeat.”¹⁶ He argues “that many ways exist to win a war, various ways are not equivalent, and final victory does not necessarily belong to the side that dictates the conditions of peace.”¹⁷ Nations and people can view victory and defeat from a variety of perspectives that change over time. The emergence of non-state actors as military adversaries further complicates the analysis, because these groups may seek to win by merely surviving, making it difficult to attain either decisive military victory against them or the genuine acceptance of defeat.¹⁸

Examining the successes and failures of selected military occupations since 1815, political scientist David M. Edelstein concludes that, regardless of the extent of victory, military occupations are difficult to execute and fail more often than they succeed.¹⁹ Edelstein identifies three factors that make a successful occupation possible. The first is acceptance by the occupied population of the need for occupation, usually because the defeated nation has been devastated by the conflict and wants help to sustain its people and to rebuild. The second is the perception by both the occupier and the occupied of a common internal or external security threat to the occupied nation. The third factor is a credible guarantee of a timely end to the occupation.²⁰ “Despite the relatively successful military occupations of Germany and Japan after World War II,” Edelstein writes, careful examination indicates that unusual geopolitical circumstances

were the keys to success in those two cases.”²¹ The unusual circumstances were the “commonly perceived threat” of Soviet Communism.²² This security threat had the effect of causing the occupied nations to welcome the occupying forces as protection against an external threat, buying the occupiers additional time to pursue their long term objectives. However, even the special circumstances generated by an external threat may be complicated by political, ethnic, or other divisions within the occupied nation.²³

So the school of thought that the acceptance of defeat by an enemy is critical to strategic victory is only one of several possible approaches to the question of how to achieve post-conflict success. We will proceed to examine the historical cases that resonate most strongly in contemporary American popular discourse.

The American South after the Civil War

The Confederate Congress adjourned in Richmond, Virginia for the last time on 18 March 1865. Its members quickly left the city, eager to get away before Union forces seized their capital city. They were followed in early April by Confederate President Jefferson Davis and his cabinet, who briefly relocated their government to Danville, Virginia before continuing south. Despite a string of severe Confederate setbacks, Davis remained convinced that his cause could still triumph if the people would rise and join the fight.²⁴ However, his general-in-chief, Robert E. Lee did not have the luxury of physical separation from the harsh realities of the military situation and asked for surrender terms from General Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Courthouse on April 1865. Grant’s surrender terms for Lee and his Army are remembered as generous under the circumstances, allowing for the parole of Lee’s soldiers and their peaceful return home. The surrender of Lee’s army was followed over the next two months by the

surrenders of the remaining significant Confederate armies under General Joseph E. Johnston, General Richard Taylor, and General Edmund Kirby Smith. Taken as a whole, these surrenders represented the practical end of the Confederacy.

The Confederacy constituted an example in which population, military, and government all experienced a sense of military defeat. Earlier in the war, after his march through Georgia, General Sherman wrote of his effort to bring the war home to the people of the South, “we are not only fighting hostile armies, but a hostile people, and must make old and young, rich and poor, feel the hard hand of war . . . I know that this recent movement of mine through Georgia has had a wonderful effect. . . . Thousands who have been deceived by their lying newspapers to believe that we were being whipped all the time now realize the truth, and have no appetite for a repetition of the same experience.”²⁵ By the time of Lee’s surrender, large parts of the Confederacy were already under direct Union control, additional large parts had experienced the “hard hand of war” in the form of punitive campaigns and raids by Union forces, the remaining armies of the Confederacy were riddled by desertion, starving, and on the verge of collapse, and the Confederate government had nearly dissolved. Following Lee’s surrender, Jefferson Davis asked General Johnston for his views about continuing the fight, to which Johnston replied, “My views are, sir, that our people are tired of the war, feel themselves whipped, and will not fight. . . . My men are daily deserting in large numbers. Since Lee’s defeat they regard the war as at an end.”²⁶ The Confederacy was physically exhausted, and its military leaders and soldiers largely accepted defeat and forcible reintegration into the Union. The United States achieved its original objective of

preserving the Union, eliminating the idea of future state secession, and asserting the permanent primacy of the federal government.

Now the victorious Union faced the task of reintegrating the states of the former Confederacy into the United States. President Abraham Lincoln favored a lenient and generous approach to reintegration and reconstruction, one that would reestablish state and local governments quickly and with minimal punishment of the defeated rebels. He began to implement this approach during the war in territory that was under Union control. After Lincoln's assassination in April 1865, President Andrew Johnson took up the mantle of moderate reconstruction. He appointed provisional state governors who were, in several cases, Confederate officials or sympathizers, and he permitted former rebels and secessionists to participate in the reconstitution of state and local governments, arguably negating much of the impact of the South's defeat. Using this framework and their dominant positions within the South's hierarchical society, the former rebels reconstituted their governments and reestablished their authority over the former slave population through the implementation of restrictive Black Codes.²⁷

Outraged by Johnson's permissiveness and its exploitation by the Southern political elite, in 1866 Congress increasingly took measures to clamp down on the white South and emphasize the reality of defeat. But the ensuing "Military Reconstruction" was a misnomer. The South was never occupied by substantial military forces in the way that Germany or Japan was after World War II. With the exception of forces deployed to Texas with an eye toward the French in Mexico, the number of troops deployed to the South was very small and their mandate was not clear or specific. Further, the United States Army had no effective doctrine or training for military

occupation or stability operations. Drastically reduced in strength after the Civil War, the Army found the going to be difficult in the post-war South. Reporting from Charleston, South Carolina in April, 1866, Major General Adelbert Ames wrote of the difficult circumstances facing federal troops: "five of my men have been killed; a number wounded and many fired upon. . . . With one exception (which when the facts appear is no exception) no effort has been made by the citizens to bring the offenders to justice, or assist the military authorities."²⁸ The condition of the former slaves was no better. "So long as he is subordinate after the manner of a slave and not of a freedman, and does as well he is safe from violence; but when he attempts to depart from his old discipline and assert a single privilege, he meets opposition."²⁹

Ames' report did not describe an isolated situation. Violence was endemic throughout the South, as the dispossessed ex-Confederates formed paramilitary and vigilante groups to intimidate or kill freedman, reformers, and Republican officials. This insurgency was ultimately successful in stalemating the subsequent attempts of radical Republicans in Congress to reform the South until the North abandoned reconstruction in 1877.³⁰ Reconstruction ended with the ex-Confederates firmly in power in state and local governments and the former slaves largely disenfranchised and without basic civil rights and liberties.

The United States' objectives evolved during the war, beginning with preservation of the Union, and then growing to include emancipation of slaves. The North achieved those objectives, and that outcome was never seriously called into question after the war. The federal government and northern people never reached consensus upon the validity of the additional objectives of civil, political and economic

equality. As a result, the political settlement imposed upon the South after the Civil War was inconsistent. Moderate Presidential Reconstruction provided some hope for the future for the former Confederates, while Radical Congressional Reconstruction offered hope to the former slaves and white Republicans. Neither settlement effectively addressed the society as a whole.

Germany after World War I

World War I ended in November 1918 with the German Army in a state of collapse. As early as August 1918, the de facto German war leader, General Erich Ludendorff recognized that the German Army no longer possessed the capability to win in the West against growing allied strength. By late September, Ludendorff had lost his will to continue the war and called for an armistice.³¹ The German people too were at a breaking point. The allied naval blockade had brought food short shortages and hardship. Labor strikes swept Germany, and the people appeared to be ready for Russian-style revolution. The Imperial German government collapsed and Kaiser Wilhelm abdicated his throne as the revolutionary movement gained strength. However, the revolutionary movement produced no charismatic leader, and the Army's remaining leadership formed an alliance with the new provisional government against the revolutionary movements.³² In the end, Germany experienced a partial revolution: one that changed the nature of government but did not drastically change the social or economic order, but the old order was overturned nonetheless.³³ For a people, an army, and a government that had gone to war in a frenzy of martial joy, this was the harshest of outcomes.

The blow was made stronger by the Paris Peace Conference and subsequent Treaty of Versailles. Rejecting the “Peace without Victory” contained in President Woodrow Wilson’s Fourteen Points, the Allies imposed a humiliating and punitive settlement upon Germany that included the loss of some of its territory, the loss of overseas colonies reparations to the Allies, and strict limits on the size of its armed forces. But although the Rhineland provinces were temporarily occupied, no other substantial occupying military forces garrisoned Germany to represent a physical symbol of defeat, impose order, or stabilize the nation. Indeed, as the German Army returned home from the front, the prevailing sentiment was that the Army had not been defeated on the field of battle (*im Felde unbesiegt*). The first President of the postwar Weimar Republic, Friedrich Ebert, said of the Army, “No enemy has defeated you. Only when the enemy’s superiority in numbers and resources became suffocating did you relinquish the fight.”³⁴ This myth, akin to the American South’s “Lost Cause” myth, soon spawned another, perhaps far more dangerous myth, that of “the stab-in-the-back” (*Dolchstoß*). By insisting that the heroic soldiers at the front had been fatally wounded by a lack of support on the homefront, it allowed political leaders of all stripes to find scapegoats for the German defeat. For Adolf Hitler and the Nazis, those scapegoats were Jews and Marxists, among others. The *Dolchstoß* myth provided powerful ammunition to support his worldview and to galvanize the German people behind him.³⁵

Was the German nation prepared to accept its defeat in World War I? Were the German people, army, and government morally and physically exhausted and ready to accept the outcomes of the defeat—dramatic changes to the status quo that would fundamentally reorder their society, including loss of territory, demilitarization, and

disarmament? It is the accepted wisdom that Germany's defeat in World War I and postwar instability set the conditions for the rise of Adolf Hitler and World War II. This long term outcome would indicate that the German nation did not accept its defeat. What seemed a decisive defeat in 1918 evolved over time into something that looked much different.³⁶ If there was a time to consolidate victory over Germany, it ended as the *im Felde unbesiegt* and *Dolchstoß* gained ground and propelled the German into a state of anger, violence, and instability.³⁷ Saddled with a punishing, imposed peace settlement, the new German government proved unable to deal with the negative forces of unleashed by "military defeat, political revolution, and domestic turmoil."³⁸

Germany after World War II

The end of World War II was far different for the German nation. The physical destruction of Germany was extensive and devastating. Large portions of the population had been subjected to heavy aerial bombardment. The war leader, Adolf Hitler, was dead.³⁹ Hitler's primary Nazi subordinates were also either dead or in the custody of the Allies, awaiting trial for war crimes. Germany was overrun by invading armies, including the savage Russian onslaught in the East, and the German armed forces were virtually destroyed. The Allied forces were consolidating their positions, preparing for a large scale, long term military occupation and government. Moreover, the Allies were determined not to repeat the mistakes that followed World War I.

Was the German nation prepared to accept its defeat in World War II? Unlike World War I, the Germans had experienced their military defeat first hand. Especially in the cities and industrial areas, German civilians knew that they had suffered as much as soldiers at the front, and, indeed, had suffered passively with little or no chance to fight

back against the enemy. The physical devastation was so extensive that the people had to focus on basic needs and day-to-day survival. They had little appetite for agitation or even political activity of any kind.⁴⁰ The people were morally and physically exhausted. The German armed forces were destroyed, their positions, camps, and bases overrun by the Allies. For a time prior to the German surrender, the Anglo-American leadership was concerned about the creation of a German “national redoubt” in the Alps, to be manned by the SS and other Nazi loyalists committed to fight to the death.⁴¹ However, any last ditch resistance evaporated with the death of Hitler, and German soldiers laid down their arms and joined the civilian populace in the postwar struggle for survival. The armed forces were morally and physically exhausted. With the surrender, the Nazi government ceased to exist, replaced by the Allies’ military government. On the American side, this military government was planned and prepared for several years and was generally adequately resourced. The occupation governments in West Germany were effective in fostering security, stability, and democracy, but, according to historian James M. Diehl, the role of the occupying forces was more indirect than direct. The occupying forces were effective because they shielded and insulated the newly established democratic government from popular opposition and discontent. Furthermore, the harsh Soviet rule of East Germany provided a strong negative contrast to the western zone, which had the unintended effect of promoting democracy and stability.⁴² The German defeat was consolidated and extended by reasonably effective Anglo-American military government, the Marshall Plan, and the threat posed by Soviet communism. In summary, the German people, army, and government accepted their World War II defeat more completely than they did after World War I.

Iraq after Saddam Hussein

The United States toppled the regime of Saddam Hussein and seized Baghdad with a decisive three-week military campaign culminating symbolically on April 9, 2003 with the toppling of the large statue of Saddam in Baghdad's Firdos Square. The campaign was judged a tremendous success. It was swift and decisive. It dislocated and defeated the Iraqi Army, achieving its objectives with minimal mass and little physical destruction. On May 23, 2003, Ambassador Paul Bremer, head of the Coalition Provisional Authority for Iraq, issued an order disbanding the Iraqi armed forces, government ministries, and other organizations related to the Baath Party.⁴³ By the summer of 2003, a deadly insurgency began to develop and, with the bombing of the Golden Mosque in Samarra in February 2006, civil war threatened the nation. During the ensuing years, the United States government continued to develop and refine its objectives and strategy. By 2008, the renewed counterinsurgency focus, together with increased American troop levels, and the Sunni Arab Awakening against the commonly perceived security threat caused by the insurgents dramatically improved the security situation in Iraq, setting the stage for the next round of Iraqi elections.

Was the Iraqi nation prepared to accept defeat in April 2003? Despite media coverage of Iraqi civilian casualties and property damage, most of the Iraqi people were largely untouched by the war. Neither the widespread devastation experienced by Germany and Japan during World War II, nor the swaths of destruction inflicted by Sherman on the American South were visited on the Sunni strongholds of Iraq. Although Saddam's Sunni power base was not morally or physically exhausted by the initial invasion and seizure of Baghdad, the Shiite and Kurdish segments of the population seemed prepared to embrace the coalition forces as liberators.

The Iraqi Army largely dissolved when confronted with coalition forces during the invasion. Where Iraqi units did stand and fight, they were decisively defeated or destroyed. However, the campaign was so short that the surviving members of the Iraqi armed forces were not left morally exhausted, and they were left with abundant military means to wage an insurgency against coalition forces. Further, the insurgents had sources of support that were not available to the defeated combatants after the Civil War or the World Wars. Iraqi insurgents could count on support—people, material, and money—passing through several neighboring countries.

The invasion toppled the Iraqi government, and Saddam Hussein, his sons, and key lieutenants were killed, captured, or fled the country. With the authoritarian regime gone, Iraq was thrown into political chaos with many political parties and factions, some with their own private armies, like that of Moqtada al Sadr—an environment not unlike that of post-World War I Weimar Republic Germany. The reconstruction effort in Iraq is ongoing, and we will not be able to judge its success or failure for many years. The historical analogies to previous wars are instructive, although none is entirely a clean fit. Keeping in mind that there is no perfect model, there appear to be more similarities between post-April 2003 Iraq and previous unsuccessful post-war outcomes than between Iraq and post-World War II Germany and Japan.⁴⁴

Conclusions

The research indicates that the acceptance of defeat may contribute to post-conflict success, but it is not as important as the superficial op-ed analysis would lead us to believe. Other factors may be of equal or greater importance; among them clearly defined post-conflict objectives, the size and effectiveness of post-conflict military

occupation, and the perception of a common threat that strengthens the relationship between the United States and the former enemy state or entity. War weariness on the part of a defeated population, may reduce the likelihood of postwar violence. Post-conflict success requires some effective combination of the preceding factors, beginning with clear strategic objectives, but no single factor constitutes a prerequisite for or a guarantor of post-conflict success.

With Germany and Japan after World War II, the United States was able to achieve a combination of these factors that was sufficient to yield long term strategic success and stability. After the Civil War, the South was defeated militarily and the Union was permanently preserved, but the United States government was never able to clearly articulate or realize all of its postwar objectives during Reconstruction. Iraq remains a work in progress. The future there is uncertain, but conditions there have improved as the United States has continued to define its objectives and improved the effectiveness of its military occupation. Perhaps as important, there appears to be commonly perceived security threat, Al-Qaeda in Iraq, creating common ground between occupier and the occupied.

The more expansive our post-conflict objectives, the more pessimistic we ought to be about the prospects for success. Future conflicts will continue to require that we kill our enemies and destroy their means of resistance, and it is satisfying to believe that we can punish an enemy's military, government, and people to the extent that they will accept their defeat and willingly submit to our post-conflict objectives. However, the evidence indicates that this is not likely. Absent an effective combination of the various factors that would appear to contribute to post-conflict success, simply punishing the

enemy to cause him to accept defeat may prove to be counterproductive over the long term.

Endnotes

¹ Douglas MacArthur, "Farewell to Congress," (Washington, DC, April 19, 1951), <http://www.AmericanRhetoric.com/speeches/douglasmacarthurfarewelladdress.htm> (accessed 28 February 2009).

² Ralph Peters, "In Praise of Attrition," *Parameters* 34, no 2, (Summer 2004): 31.

³ Victor Davis Hanson, *The Soul of Battle* (New York: The Free Press, 1999), 11.

⁴ Bing West, *The Strongest Tribe* (New York: Random House, 2008), 42.

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